



Report on Head Start CLASS[®] Data

Fiscal Years 2012-2015

Fall 2016



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES





Introduction

The Office of Head Start (OHS) is pleased to share this report regarding the use of the CLASS Pre-K® instrument during monitoring reviews of Head Start grantees. Information is provided about the national CLASS® scores and about the characteristics of the grantees. Information on the teachers, children, and classroom activities also is presented. Regional and state scores are included at the end of the report. Throughout the report, there are questions for you to think about.

We hope that this information stimulates dialogue about quality improvement – with appreciation of the steps your program has already taken and ideas about what it can do in the future.

Using CLASS® in Head Start

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 requires that the OHS monitoring review process include the use of “a valid and reliable research-based observational instrument...that assesses classroom quality...” The Act also states that such an instrument should be used as part of the system for designation renewal (re-competition of grantees).

After extensive review of different instruments, leading early childhood experts agreed that the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS Pre-K®) was the instrument that best met the statutory requirements. Since the fall of 2011, CLASS Pre-K® has been used during monitoring reviews in center-based Head Start programs.



What is CLASS®?

CLASS® is an observation tool that assesses the quality of teacher-child interaction in center-based preschool programs. CLASS® includes three domains or categories of teacher-child interaction that support children's learning and development. Within each domain are dimensions that capture more specific details of teacher-child interaction.



The three domains are

- **Emotional Support (ES)** assesses the degree to which teachers establish and promote a positive climate in their classrooms through everyday interactions.
- **Classroom Organization (CO)** assesses classroom routines and procedures related to the organization and management of children's behavior, time and attention in the classroom.
- **Instructional Support (IS)** assesses the ways in which teachers implement the curriculum to effectively promote cognitive and language development.

CLASS® is scored by trained and certified observers using a specific protocol. CLASS® evaluations are on a 7-point scale. Scores of 1-2 mean that the quality of teacher-child interaction is low. Scores of 6-7 mean that effective interactions are consistently observed. Scores are reported at the grantee level.

Reporting Head Start CLASS® Data

This report highlights findings from the national data set over a period of four fiscal years (FY) 2012 – 2015. A fiscal year extends from October 1 to September 30, which roughly corresponds to the program year. For example, fiscal year 2012 goes from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012. The monitoring cycle follows the fiscal year.

In this report, the term grantee includes delegate agencies.



Snapshot of Head Start

Head Start promotes the school readiness of young children, birth to age 5, from low-income families through agencies in their local community. In addition to education services, programs provide children and their families with health, nutrition, social, and other services. Programs build relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being, and connections to peers and community. Head Start services are responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage.



Think About...

- » What kind of conversations about CLASS® does your program have with staff, parents, and the community?
- » What do your program scores look like? What are the practices or procedures that might impact the scores?



In 2015, Head Start programs operated approximately 48,000 pre-school classes. This includes American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs.

Note: Data collected from the Program Information Report (PIR)



In 2015, Head Start programs had a total funded enrollment of 821,000 children. This includes American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start programs and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs.

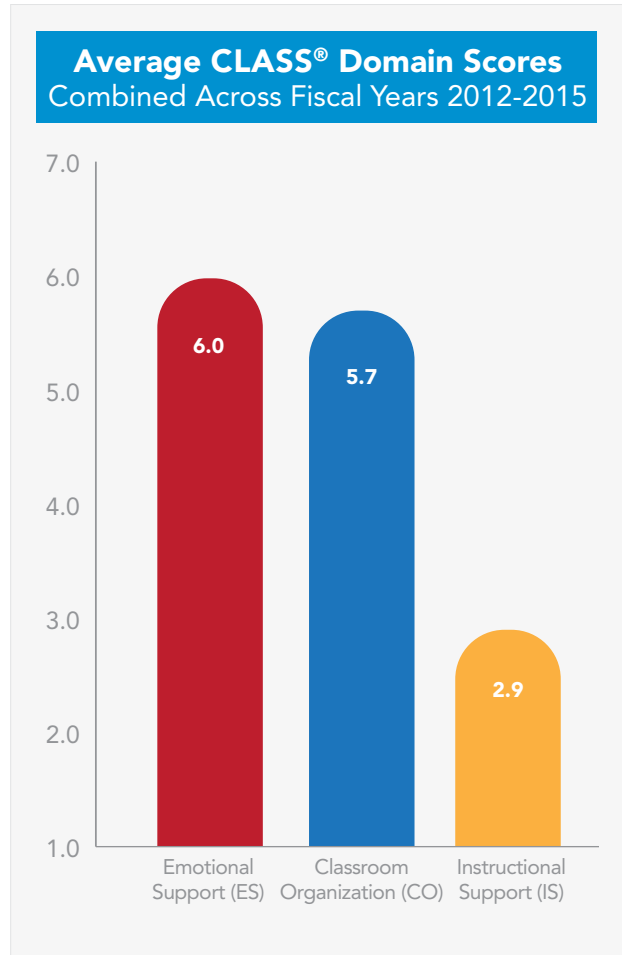
Note: Data collected from the Program Information Report (PIR)



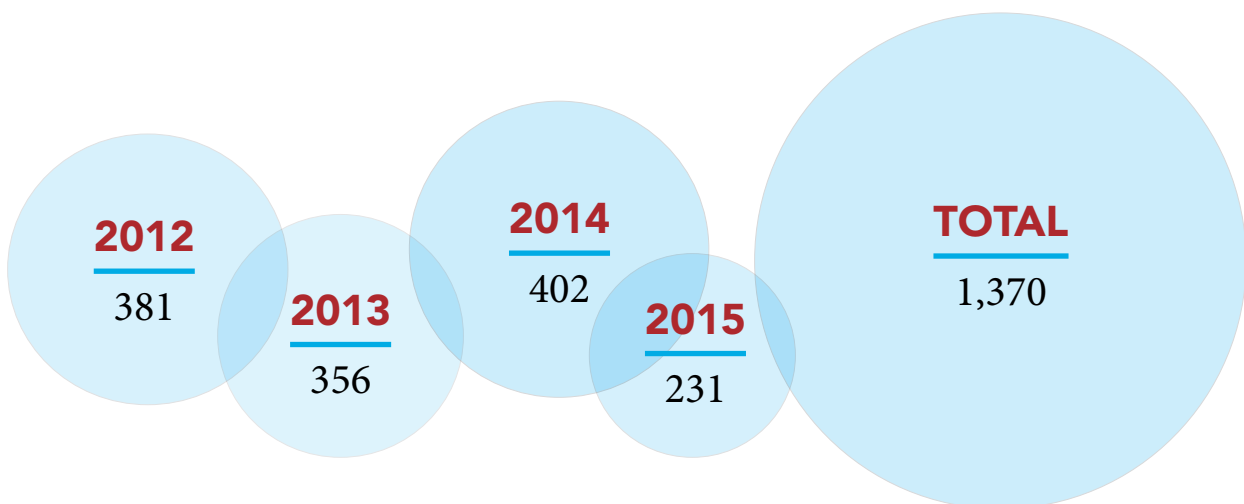
National CLASS[®] Scores

Previous large-scale studies of CLASS® have shown that the average preschool classroom scores are higher in the domains of Emotional Support and Classroom Organization than in the domain of Instructional Support. When averaged across the four-year period 2012-2015, the CLASS® scores for Head Start programs showed the same trend.

- The Emotional Support and Classroom Organization scores were consistently in the high range.
- The Instructional Support score was consistently in the low to middle range.



The number of grantees observed each year were:



Highest Domain Scores

Many grantees received high domain scores during their CLASS® reviews. Across the four-year period 2012 – 2015.

- 721 grantees received a score of 6 or higher in Emotional Support. Over 50 percent of the grantees received these high scores.
- 321 grantees received a score of 6 or higher in Classroom Organization. Nearly 25 percent of the grantees received these high scores.
- 189 grantees received a score of 3.5 or higher in Instructional Support. About 14 percent of the grantees received these scores.

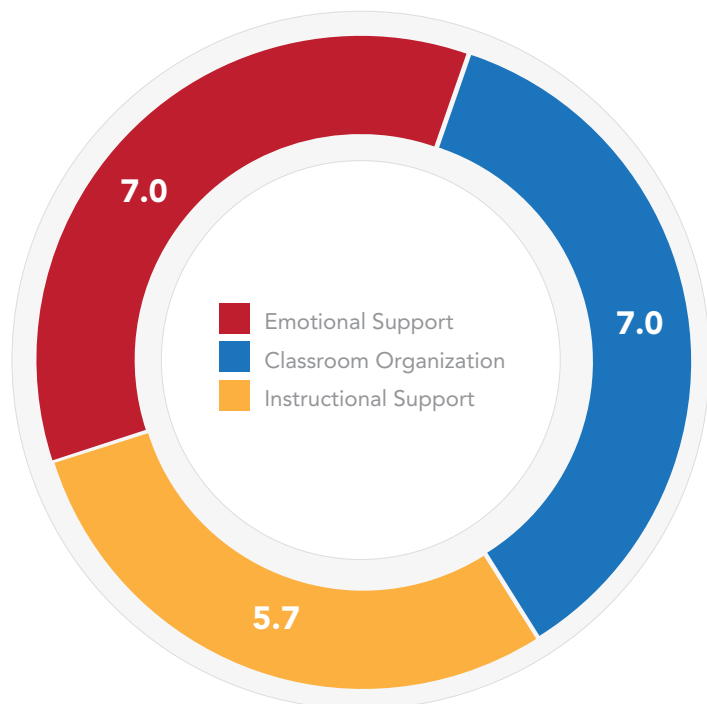


Think About...

- » In your program, do the domain scores look like the national average? Are there any major differences and what might account for them?
- » Consider how various factors, such as professional development in your program, might impact CLASS® scores. Examine other factors, such as grantee characteristics and teacher qualifications, which are discussed in the following pages.

The maximum score achieved by any grantee during the CLASS® review was:

- 7.0 in Emotional Support
- 7.0 in Classroom Organization
- 5.7 in Instructional Support





Grantee Characteristics

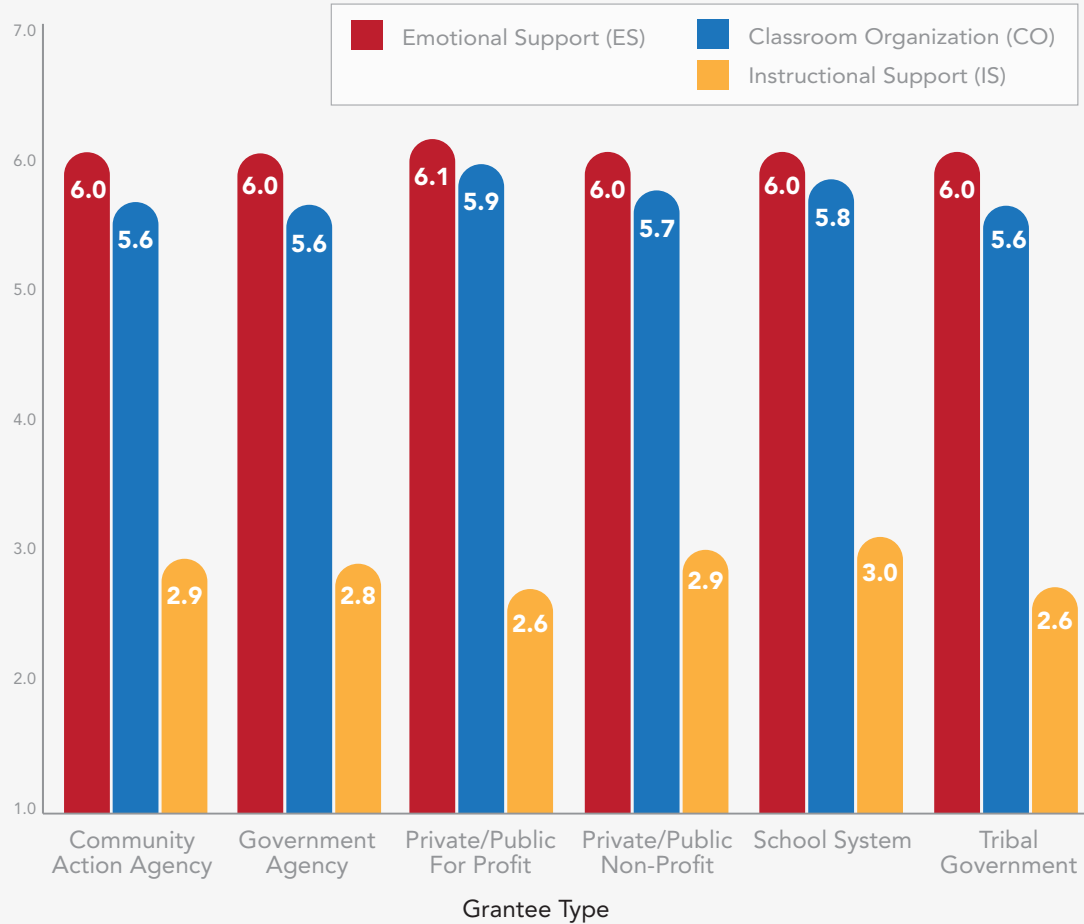
Grantee Type

Head Start grantees include school systems, community action agencies, other government agencies, private and public non-profits, and Tribal government or consortium agencies. Across the four-year period 2012-2015, 1,370 grantees participated in the CLASS® reviews, ranging from very small (127 grantees) to super grantees (10 grantees).

Grantee Type with Completed CLASS® Observations Fiscal Years 2012 - 2015				
	2012	2013	2014	2015
Community Action Agency	38%	41%	39%	35%
Government Agency	5%	8%	7%	8%
Private/Public For Profit	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Private/Public Non-Profit	29%	25%	27%	37%
School System	14%	20%	16%	17%
Tribal Government	14%	6%	9%	3%



Average CLASS® Domain Scores by Grantee Type Combined Across Fiscal Years 2012-2015



- Across grantee types, Emotional Support and Classroom Organization scores were consistently in the high range. Instructional Support scores were consistently in the low to middle range.

Think About...

- » In your program, which photos or videos could you share with staff, families, and community members to demonstrate high-quality emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support?



Grantee Size

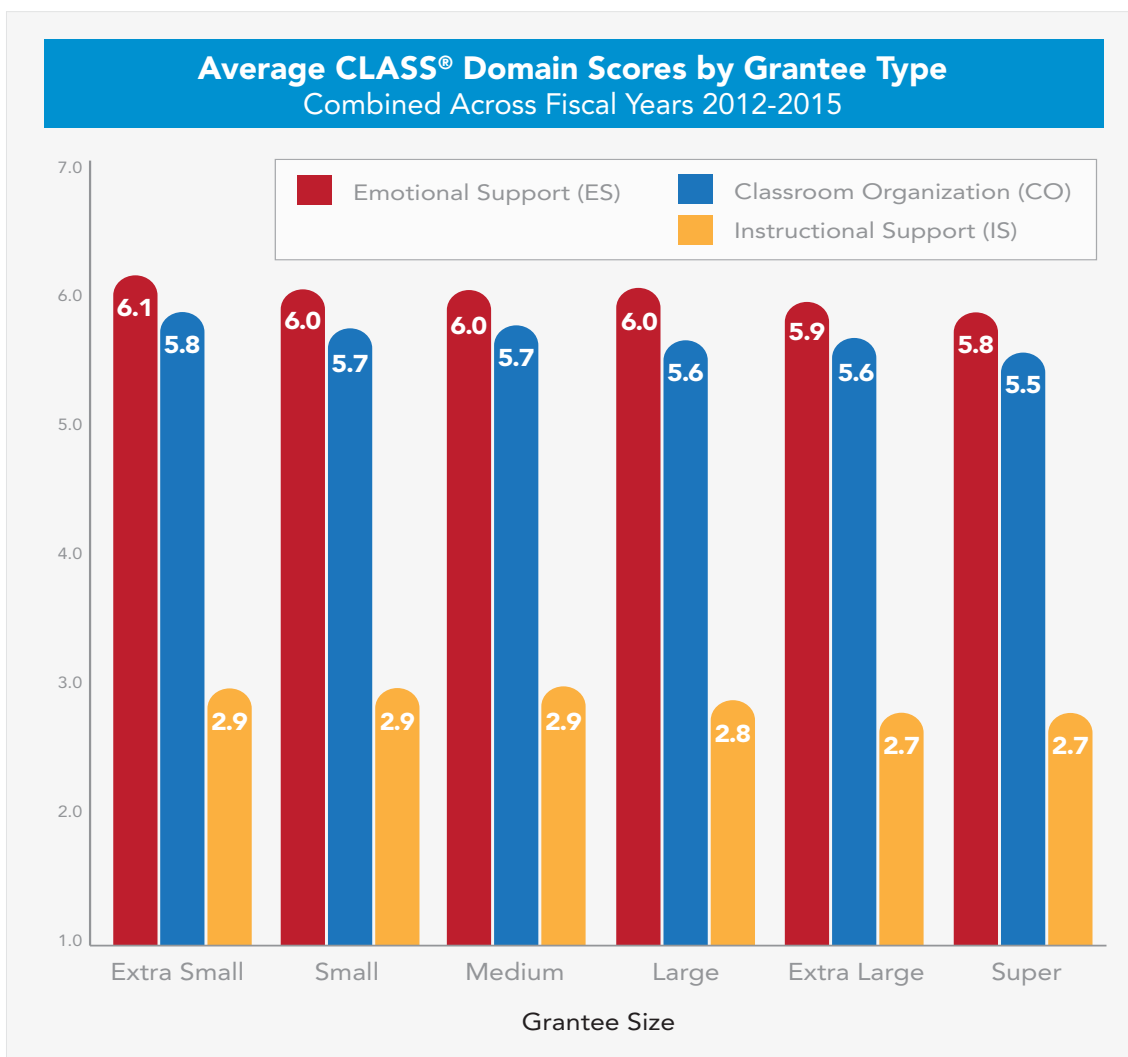
Size of Grantees with Completed CLASS® Observations				
Fiscal Years 2012 - 2015				
	2012	2013	2014	2015
EXTRA SMALL 100 or fewer children	9%	9%	11%	6%
SMALL 101 to 300 children	31%	34%	32%	32%
MEDIUM 301 to 600 children	34%	28%	28%	31%
LARGE 601 to 1,000 children	12%	14%	13%	19%
EXTRA LARGE 1,001 to 5,000 children	13%	14%	15%	12%
SUPER more than 5,000 children	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%



- Regardless of grantee size, Emotional Support and Classroom Organization scores were consistently in the high range. Instrumental Support scores were consistently in the low to middle range.
- Extra small grantees had higher scores in all domains compared to extra large and super grantees.

Think About...

- » What might account for the differences in scores based on grantee size?
- » What advantages might extra small grantees have?
- » How large is your grantee?
Do you think that your program size affects the quality of teacher-child interactions?





Teacher Qualifications

- Grantees with a higher percentage of teachers with Bachelor's degrees had higher CLASS® scores on average than programs with fewer teachers with Bachelor's degrees.

Think About...

- » In your program, are there opportunities for staff to obtain course credits or work toward a degree?
- » How does your program encourage staff to share their knowledge or reflect on their teaching practices?





Child Characteristics

Approximately 13 percent of the children observed during CLASS® interactions were identified as children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

- Grantees with high percentages of children with IEPs had slightly higher CLASS® scores in each domain including Instructional Support.

OHS requires that the CLASS® reviewer be fluent in the predominant language used in the classroom. Spanish language competency is evaluated for CLASS® reviewers who are assigned to conduct observations in programs and/or classrooms where Spanish is the dominant language spoken by the children. There are no reviewers available who are fluent in other home languages spoken by children.

- There were no differences in the CLASS® scores of grantees with high percentages of children whose dominant language was Spanish.



Think About...

- » In your program, do you think that classrooms with more children with IEPs have higher quality teacher-child interaction? Why or why not?
- » How can the positive teaching practices associated with children with IEPs be implemented with children who do not have IEPs?
- » How does your program ensure that teacher interactions with children who are dual language learners are high-quality interactions across the CLASS® domains?



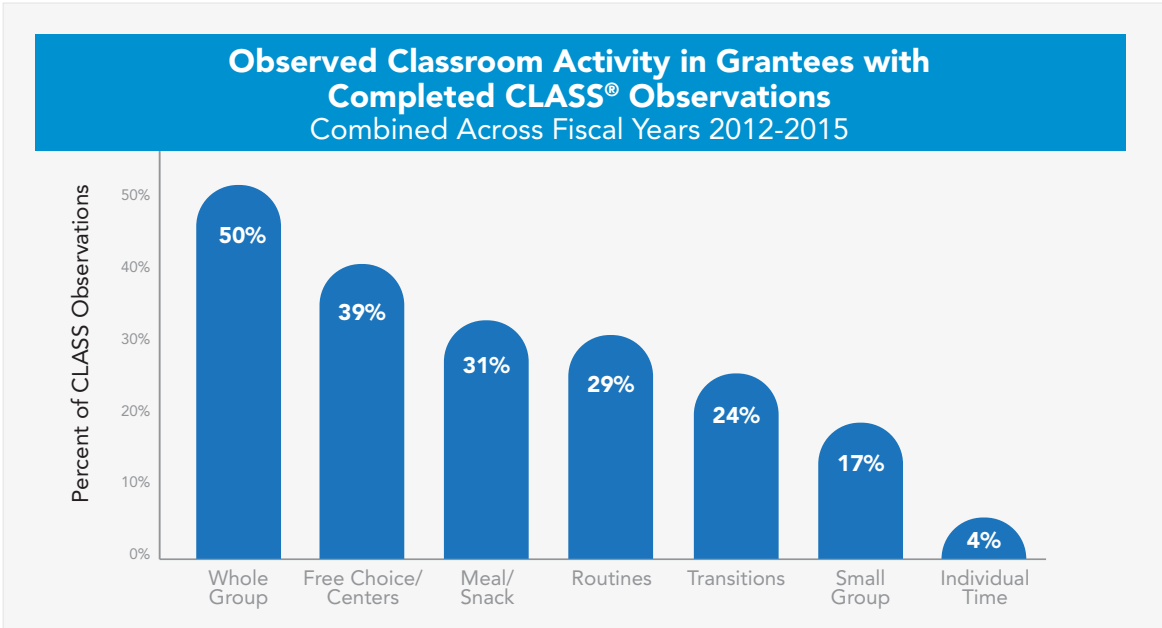
Classroom Activities

During the CLASS® observation, reviewers watched and coded the activity in the classroom for 20 minutes. A second observation was done on another day. Multiple activities often were observed during the 20-minute observation. OHS recognizes all activities, including transitions and meal times, as opportunities for quality teaching.

- A wide range of classroom activities was observed. Half of CLASS® observations included Whole Group activities. The next most frequently observed activity was Free Choice (39 percent), followed by Meal/Snack (31 percent).
- For the most part, CLASS® scores did not tend to be higher or lower based on the type of activities that were observed. However, several activities stand out:
 - Classroom observations that included free choice activities tended to have higher CLASS® scores in comparison to observations that did not include these activities.
 - Classroom observations that included meals and snacks tended to have lower ratings, especially for Instructional Support.
 - Observations during Transitions did not impact the CLASS® scores.

Think About...

- » Are transitions and meal times used as opportunities for conversation and positive teacher-child interaction? Do outdoor activities provide opportunities for interaction and children’s learning?
- » In your program, how do you promote high-quality interactions across all the domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework? For example, how do staff-child interactions promote learning in the Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development domain?



Do Grantees Use Observational Tools?

The answer is overwhelmingly YES – in fiscal year 2015, 96 percent of Head Start programs reported that they used an observation tool or instrument, including CLASS®, to measure teacher-child interaction. The purpose was to plan professional development and improve classroom quality.



In 2015, 96 percent of Head Start programs used a staff-child interaction observation tool.

Note: Data collected from the Program Information Report (PIR)

Think About...

- » Did the requirements of the Act of 2007 lead your program to implement a more systematic approach to observing teachers and providing them with feedback?
- » Which tool does your program use to measure teacher-child interaction? If the CLASS[®] tool is not being used, does the alternative assess how the teacher uses instructional strategies?
- » Are the results shared with individual teachers to help them reflect on and improve their teaching practices?
- » Are the results used to target areas needing improvement and to plan professional development?





STATE AND REGION SCORES

State Scores

- Across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories, Emotional Support and Classroom Organization scores were consistently in the high range. Instructional Support scores were consistently in the low to middle range.
- There were no significant differences in the scores of the states.

Average CLASS® Domain Scores by State Combined Across Fiscal Years 2012 - 2015				
State	Number of grantees	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Alabama	26	5.8	5.4	2.5
Alaska	13	5.9	5.5	2.8
Arizona	16	6.1	5.7	2.7
Arkansas	16	6.0	5.6	2.8
California	78	6.1	5.7	2.8
Colorado	38	6.2	5.9	3.1
Connecticut	14	6.1	5.8	2.9
Delaware	3	6.1	5.8	3.1
District of Columbia	1	6.0	5.8	2.7
Florida	40	5.8	5.4	2.8
Georgia	29	5.9	5.5	2.7
Guam	1	6.1	5.7	2.1
Hawaii	4	6.1	5.9	3.1
Idaho	11	5.9	5.6	2.8
Illinois	38	6.1	5.8	3.0
Indiana	37	6.0	5.7	3.1
Iowa	18	6.0	5.7	2.8
Kansas	25	6.1	5.9	3.0
Kentucky	37	6.1	5.9	3.3
Louisiana	40	5.8	5.5	2.6
Maine	15	6.2	5.8	3.3
Maryland	13	5.8	5.5	2.7
Massachusetts	27	6.1	5.8	3.0
Michigan	39	6.1	5.7	3.0
Minnesota	36	6.1	5.8	3.0

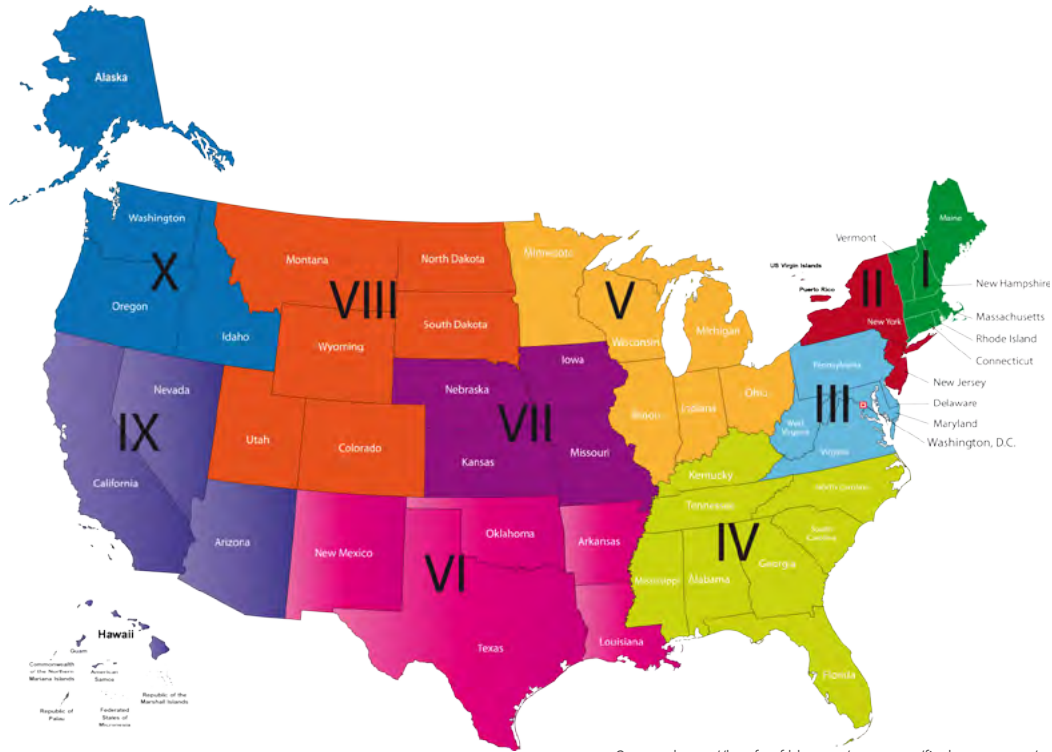
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Average CLASS® Domain Scores by State Combined Across Fiscal Years 2012 - 2015				
State	Number of grantees	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Massachusetts	27	6.1	5.8	3.0
Michigan	39	6.1	5.7	3.0
Minnesota	36	6.1	5.8	3.0
Mississippi	14	5.8	5.5	2.6
Missouri	20	5.9	5.4	2.9
Montana	19	6.0	5.5	3.0
Nebraska	16	6.0	5.6	2.8
Nevada	5	6.1	6.0	2.8
New Hampshire	5	6.0	5.4	3.0
New Jersey	17	6.0	5.7	3.0
New Mexico	25	6.0	5.5	2.5
New York	78	6.0	5.7	2.9
North Carolina	53	6.0	5.7	2.8
North Dakota	14	6.0	5.7	2.8
Northern Mariana Islands	1	6.4	6.0	2.4
Ohio	50	6.0	5.6	2.9
Oklahoma	31	5.8	5.5	2.6
Oregon	26	6.1	5.8	2.9
Pennsylvania	50	6.0	5.7	3.0
Puerto Rico	17	6.0	5.6	2.7
Rhode Island	9	6.2	6.0	3.3
South Carolina	15	5.7	5.4	2.5
South Dakota	13	5.8	5.4	2.9
Tennessee	19	6.0	5.8	3.1
Texas	81	5.9	5.6	2.8
Utah	8	6.1	5.9	3.3
Vermont	8	6.4	6.2	3.7
Virgin Islands	1	5.7	5.3	2.2
Virginia	45	5.9	5.7	2.9
Washington	49	6.1	5.8	3.0
West Virginia	22	6.0	5.6	2.8
Wisconsin	38	6.0	5.7	2.8
Wyoming	10	6.2	5.8	2.9

Region Scores

- Across the Regions, Emotional Support and Classroom Organization scores were consistently in the high range. Instructional Support scores were consistently in the low to middle range.



Source: <https://hmf.acf.hhs.gov/programs/find-a-program/>

Note: Region XI is American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start and Region XII is Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. These Regions are geographically distributed throughout the country.

Average CLASS® Domain Scores by Region Combined Across Fiscal Years 2012 - 2015				
Region	Number of grantees	Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
I	74	6.2	5.8	3.1
II	110	6.0	5.7	2.9
III	135	6.0	5.7	2.9
IV	225	5.9	5.6	2.9
V	214	6.1	5.7	3.0
VI	169	5.9	5.6	2.7
VII	74	6.0	5.7	2.9
VIII	82	6.2	5.9	3.1
IX	78	6.0	5.7	2.9
X	64	6.1	5.8	3.0
XI	124	6.0	5.6	2.6
XII	25	6.0	5.6	2.5

LINKS

The Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) is the Office of Head Start Web portal. You can find information about the use of CLASS[®] and CLASS[®] results for grantees by clicking on these links.

Frequently asked questions and answers regarding the use of the CLASS[®] Teacher-Child Observation Instrument in Head Start

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/sr/class/use-of-class.pdf>

A National Overview of Grantee CLASS[®] Scores 2014

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/data/class-reports/class-data-2014.html>

Monitoring Reports on Individual Grantees, including CLASS[®] Scores

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/data/psr>

Understanding and Using CLASS[®] for Program Improvement

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/docs/class-brief.pdf>

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